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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE 76TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW YORK BUILDING CONGRESS
INTRODUCTION OF SENATOR MOYNIHAN
MAY 2, 1997
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

I am honored -- and humbled -- to introduce a leader who I have admired for years, as he thought about how government social policy should do better for its people.

Earlier this morning I had another great honor. I stood on the Mall in Washington with President Clinton as he paid tribute to another New Yorker, whose social policies are America, Franklin Roosevelt.

As Transportation Secretary, there was great meaning for me as the President opened FDR's new memorial. For I watched Roosevelt take his place in the view of three other great Presidents -- known better for other reasons, but who all appreciated the importance of transportation. Washington, who helped open the west; Jefferson, who brought us the National Road; and Lincoln, who gave us the transcontinental railroad.

And it was Roosevelt who pioneered what eventually became America's great interstate system, with the New York State Thruway, as its first segment.

But soon after we began building the interstate, a young New Yorker cut from the same cloth as Roosevelt, wrote of his concerns highways may have on urban areas. In 1960, Pat Moynihan published an article in the Reporter and called it: "New Roads and Urban Chaos."

Then in 1991, Senator Moynihan authored for our nation the landmark transportation legislation that brought back to our cities what he warned us 30 years before that we had forgotten to do.

This legislation, ISTEA, was passed with a Republican President and a Democratic Congress, because this Senator recognizes that in order to fix America, we must do it together, on a bi-partisan basis.

His ISTEA empowered state and local communities to make more decisions; it dramatically increased our infrastructure investments; it brought opportunity to more Americans, for the Senator knows highways are more than concrete, asphalt, and steel.

ISTEA has brought more construction of transit systems than at any time since the New York subways were first built; it has helped clean up our environment and make travel safer; and it has brought bike and pedestrian paths, for all to enjoy.

In this era of re-inventing government, Senator Moynihan's ISTEA legislation does not need to be re-invented. No, it needs to be renewed this year. And clearly we need to build upon its successes as we move to the 21st century.

So, in March, President Clinton announced our proposal -- what we call NEXTEA. I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Senator for introducing the President's proposal in the Senate ... and to the Building Congress, for your support.

The President's plan would invest $175 billion in the next six years in highways and transit systems, almost $12 billion of that for New York, supporting 75,000 jobs.

Of all the pleasures in my job, one of the finest will be working with you, sir, as Congress renews this legislation. I am sure I will get an education in transportation policy.

And that certainly will include the Senator's continuing transportation vision for New York -- including converting the Farley Post Office into a train station and the proposal for a train link to New York airports.

Senator Moynihan, I came to New York today, to be with a roomful of people who appreciate you -- and clearly that includes me.

I have watched you serve four Presidents, and four terms in the Senate -- and always speaking and voting for what you believe in -- for what you feel is just. You have been a fierce defender of social policy, the guardian of the good that Franklin Roosevelt gave us all.

So, it gives me great pleasure to present the New York Building Congress' Leadership Award to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
NATIONAL AIRPORT TOWER DEDICATION
MAY 12, 1997
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

Ten days ago, I was at the dedication of the Franklin Roosevelt Memorial on the West Potomac Park, and as all of you know, located right in the flight path of National Airport.

The President, Vice President, and many distinguished leaders all spoke. As they did, one plane, after another, after another flew over interrupting all. I could see people looking at me, thinking: can't the Transportation Secretary do something about the noise?

And I thought, Franklin Roosevelt, the President who built National, who knew planes were not noise, but the sounds of freedom -- is he smiling down on me now!

And I want to thank the controllers, because we interrupted your air space with a military fly over, and you still handled all your normal traffic. Thank you for that.

I have been in office now, but 90 days, and in these 90 days, we have signed nine open skies agreements with other countries, allowing for unrestricted air service. Last week, I was with the President in Costa Rica when we signed the very first ones with countries in this hemisphere, and as the President said: they literally will bring the Americas closer together.

For I believe that as the Interstate tied together our nation in the last half of this century, aviation will tie together our globe in the first half of the next century.

So, what we will need, ladies and gentlemen, are great airports. And when the new National opens in the summer, it will be one of the world's greatest, and clearly the most convenient.

- more -

By the way, Senator Robb, that is something your father-in-law, President Johnson, wanted for our nation. For when he formed our Department 30 years ago, he asked why is it easier to fly hundreds of miles than to move passengers to and from airports? He would love the new National.

I am pleased to announce today we will make this airport even more convenient to passengers. We are providing $10 million to Washington National, to build an enclosed passage way between the south parking structure and the existing main terminal.

And let me say this: what the FAA family needs are modern towers, with state-of-the-art equipment so that we can safely and efficiently land the tremendous increase in passengers.

Today, in this country, we fly as many passengers in seven hours as flew during the entire year that National first opened. And the growth has only begun.

But we will be ready. When the President called for the rebuilding of America's infrastructure, he meant America's airports.

Since he has taken office, we have replaced 31 towers around our nation, we have another 19 under construction, and today we are so proud to dedicate, what I think of as the monument to aviation. In the city known for its monuments -- this tower is a monument to aviation's future.

When travelers land at National, they will see the historic landmarks from one view, and Washington's newest landmark from the other.

On the outside, it is a sleek design. And inside, in both the tower and in the TRACON, are the people, who help us have the world's safest aviation system.

And let me say this: the very best part of our new home, is not new. It is the veteran, and very dedicated controllers, maintenance staff, and professional and support staff. They brought the tower on line, while never missing a day landing a plane.

That has not been easy, I know. But you did it by working together. Because this family knows, what we do is not just for ourselves, but it is for seven million American people who fly in and out of National every year.

- more -

I know better than most of your work, for when I fly, as I do so often in my job, you control about half my take-offs and landings. Every time I'm on that runway, I appreciate you.

Also, I know better than most of your work, because when I look out my window at the Department of Transportation, I can see this tower. Yes, I see your vigilance as you land planes every minute of the day.

And as I build a visionary and vigilant Department of Transportation, I just want you to know that I am proud that our National Airport family has a new home, worthy of this new airport.

Thank you very much.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
U.S. DELEGATION MEETING WITH
MEXICO WORKING GROUP OPENING STATEMENT
MAY 5, 1997
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

It is an honor that on my first international trip as Secretary I am visiting our neighbor and good friends as part of President Clinton's Cabinet. And let me thank you Secretary Ruiz, for visiting me in Washington. I hope we can carry forward from our discussions last week at our session this week.

President Clinton often says that the enemy of our time is inaction. I hope we can come together this week to find common ways to act on transportation issues, for the economic well being of millions of our citizens are affected by how we move goods across our 2000 mile border.

Mexico is our third largest trading partner. Last year, of the products you imported, 76 percent came from our country. Of course, all of the goods must use our transportation system to cross our border, and it is in our mutual interests to make the system the best it can be.

At our session, of particular importance to me will be discussions on NAFTA-related issues, including implementing the truck access schedule; the status of your regulations on small package delivery companies; access to Mexico for 53-foot trailers; and drug and alcohol testing requirements.

Beyond NAFTA, other issues of interest to me are: cooperative efforts on civil aviation; improving coordination between the U.S. Coast Guard and the Mexican Navy on narcotics interdiction, pollution response, and maritime security; and cooperative efforts on aviation technology development and assistance.

I look forward to these discussions and being able to tell our respective presidents that our transportation system will be ready to handle the increased trade we will see in the 21st century.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2, 1997

Contact: Ben Langer
Telephone: 202-366-5571

STATEMENT BY TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RODNEY E. SLATER

Today's historic budget deal sends a clear signal on the importance transportation will play in the 21st century. The road to a balanced budget will include money for roads and transit.

Transportation has always been a bi-partisan issue. I am clearly pleased that Congress joined with the President to balance the budget, while continuing to invest in education, the environment, medicare, and other areas important to our country's future, and that includes transportation.

In the new era of balanced budgets, I look forward to working with Congress on passing the President's NEXTEA proposal.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE WORKSHOP ON URBAN PASSENGER TRANSPORT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS
MAY 14, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thank you, and I am delighted to be here, to join all of those from around the United States ... and to extend a special welcome to our friends here from the Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary, and the Russian Federation.

Let me first thank our co-sponsors -- the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe ... and the International Union of Public Transport, who joined with my Department's Bureau of Transportation Statistics to bring us this conference.

And where are Ms.Rozenstine from Latvia ... and Mr. Kevesh from Russia? I understand you will be spending the next month at our Department, and I certainly welcome you to the family.

As many of you know, this conference is being held as part of the 30th anniversary celebration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Thirty years ago, when President Johnson pleaded with Congress to form our Department, he used many, many statistics to argue his case. But the statistic that most moved Americans was when he pointed out how many more Americans were losing their lives on our highways, than had died in all the wars our country ever fought.

If President Johnson were here today, he would be so proud to see how the world now comes together to talk. To share ideas. To understand how transportation binds our communities, and our nations.

Last week, I took my first international trip as Secretary. President Clinton asked me to join him on his visit to Mexico, Costa Rica, and Barbados.

What struck me is the spirit of cooperation ... of partnership, of understanding that if we are going to provide economic opportunity for all our citizens, and fix problems like drugs that hurt all our societies, we must do it together. We must take many forward steps -- together.

And I hope that as you meet today to discuss transportation, you proceed in that same direction. For it is my belief that transportation is so much more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about providing opportunities for all people.

It is about our choices, our lifestyles, our safety. Transportation is about whether our people have the means to personal mobility -- so that they can get to where they have to go.

I want you to know that public officials cannot create policies, without numbers to forecast what impact the policies will have. We can not do our jobs, without you.

This was true 150 years ago, when Abraham Lincoln stood in the U.S. House, to give a speech in favor of transportation improvements and said: "Statistics will save us from doing what we do in the wrong places." In fact, you can find that quote framed on the third floor of our building in the offices of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

But good numbers are especially important in the era of shrinking budgets that we now face.

For the first time in 30 years -- since the Transportation Department was created -- the President and Congress have an agreement to balance a budget.

I recently sent to Congress a proposal to invest $175 billion in the next six years in constructing and reconstructing our nation's highways and transit systems. It includes a 30 percent increase for clean air programs. That is a great deal of money.

Let me say this, every congressmen and senator in the U.S. is looking very closely at our numbers -- how we came up with formulas to determine where to invest. They will question every statistic, and every statistic will help guide their decisions.

So, I just dropped by to tell you how important it is for me to have good, reliable statistics and forecasts. I am glad to see your workshops are focusing on the tools, the strategies, and the options to improve the transportation and environmental information base. We need the best we can have.

And I look forward to hearing about the workshop's results, and wish you the best of luck in the remainder of your discussions.

Thank you very much.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION
MAY 14, 1997
WASHINGTON. D.C.

Thank you, Randy (Babbit), for that kind introduction.

You know, 12 hours after I was sworn in as Secretary on February 14th, the American Airlines pilots went on strike -- what a welcome!

Today, is my 90th day in office, and I think I can say that what I have done more than any other activity is travel -- and fly airplanes. I don't know if it has anything to do with my title, but your service has been great. I thank you for that.

Ninety days ago, when I took the oath of office, I said I had three goals: 1)Safety will be the number one priority of the DOT; 2) that we will invest in our infrastructure to ensure that America's transportation system meets the needs and desires of the American people in the 21st century; 3) that we will use a common-sense approach to running a department so that it works better and costs less.

We made very good progress -- across the board. In 90 days, we have signed nine aviation agreements opening skies -- from Costa Rica to Singapore — with unrestricted service. That is good for your airlines, and for creating jobs.

I believe in the same way highways connected our country in the last half of this century, in the first half of the next century it will be aviation that connects the world. As the President said last week when we signed aviation agreements in Latin America: they literally will bring the Americas closer together.

We know liberalized trade can fill planes. Since Secretary Peña signed an aviation agreement with Canada in 1994, the number of passengers you fly between our countries is up 28 percent; 17 cities that did not have non-stop service to Canada now do; and fares are down more than 20 percent.

In the last 90 days, we also have continued our efforts to improve safety Clearly, we're working to modernize the air traffic control system, buying equipment in half the time it used to take ... we have 19 air traffic control towers under construction, like the one I dedicated Monday at National ... we want to hire 500 more controllers ... following up on the Gore Commission, we're installing more bomb detection equipment at airports.

One year ago was the terrible ValuJet crash. We are recommitting ourselves to everything possible to prevent another tragedy. We've strengthened restrictions on transporting hazardous materials and increased our scrutiny of start-up airlines.

We've also implemented the commuter rule, bringing one level of safety to all scheduled carriers. I want to thank you for your support and help.

I know Nancy McFadden has been working with you on the issue of prosecuting unruly passengers. We did a pilot program in Honolulu and Los Angeles, and it was so successful, we're expanding to LaGuardia, JFK, and Newark.

With regards to how to fund the FAA, Congress has appointed a commission to study long-term alternatives.

And I can say to you that very, very soon, the President will be announcing his choice for the team to run the FAA. It is a team that will be reform minded, experienced in management, and committed to safety. And let me say this: nobody wants that team in place any sooner than I.

I know you have several issues that you will want to work with our nominees on, but let me comment on one priority: flight duty time.

In late 1995, as you know the FAA proposed increasing the maximum hours a pilot can fly from 8 to 10 hours. And we heard from you and others that this won't work — fatigue would set in.

I know where you're coming from. When I was Federal Highway Administrator, we had a national truck and bus safety summit. We came up with 17 points of concern -- and driver fatigue was at the very top of the list.

So let me say this: when the new Administrator comes on board, that person will understand your concerns, when the rule comes out.

Let me close with two points about the President.

First, since President Clinton took office, 12 million new jobs have been created. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. And the airline industry has very much rebounded as the economy has rebounded -- last year was your most profitable year -- ever. Because employed Americans fly, and unemployed ones do not. The President, wants to work with Congress to balance the budget, so that the economy can keep growing and the private sector can continue to create jobs.

The second point is an observation. Of all the things I've done in the last 90 days, one of the most remarkable was when I went to Philadelphia, with President Clinton and the former Presidents for the summit on volunteerism.

President Clinton announced that the Transportation Department, with our partners in the private sector, will reach out to a million students. I call it the Garrett A. Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program, in honor of the inventor of the traffic signal.

I'm asking my 100,000 employees to go into our schools, to have a conversation with our children, to tell them about what they do. I hope professional pilots can join us in the classroom.

For as I look to build the transportation system of the 21st century -- unless we have the workforce to fly the planes -- we will not be as good as America should be.

It was never in my wildest dreams that one day I would serve in the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States on all matters of transportation. But in my life, I had a lot of people who cared.

There are a lot of young people, who need to know, yes, that they can, too; yes, what we do is important; and, yes, with them and all of you, the best days for our country's transportation system are yet to come.

Thank you, very much.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
OPERATION LIFESAVER PRESS CONFERENCE
MAY 14, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ms. Harvey, let me say, how grateful I am for your sharing with us, and our nation your story. I know you would give anything in this world not to be here, but the good of America is that people like you, can find the strength to help others.

I think I speak for Senator DeWine, Congressman Wolf, Congressman Bachus, and Chairman Hall when I say listening to you has reminded all of us of the high obligation we have as public officials to the safety of Americans.

On my first day as Secretary, I said that safety would be my highest priority -- the North Star by which we are guided, and will be judged.

This is now my 90th day as Secretary. And of all the things I've done in the last 90 days, one of the most remarkable was when I went to Philadelphia, with President Clinton and Vice President Gore, and all the former Presidents -- to try to encourage more Americans to volunteer.

To encourage more Americans to do what Opertion Lifesaver volunteers have done for 25 years. To encourage Americans to as President Clinton says, "believe that as children of God, we can never fill our own ambitions until we help our brothers and sisters to fulfill theirs."

So, yes, it takes volunteers to save lives, as you have saved 10,000 in the last 25 years.But, yes, it also takes government action. For as President Clinton says: the enemy of our time is inaction.

Since 1991, we have closed 24,000 grade crossings -- more than 8 percent of all crossings. And we will keep closing crossings as we move toward our goal of closing 25 percent of all crossings by the year 2004.

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We have made America a safer place. I am happy to report that in 1996, there was a 16 percent reduction in the number of fatalities at crossings. And an 8 percent reduction in crossing collisions. That is a significant improvement in safety.

But we are not done. We believe that if we can educate more people on the fatal dangers of trespassing -- of jogging or riding bikes, or walking on railroad property, we can save lives. Nearly all trespassing fatalities are preventable.

And half of crashes at public crossings occur where gates, and lights, and bells exist and are functioning properly. It's not the equipment that is the problem. It is the driver's disregard for that equipment -- that is the problem.

So, today, I am pleased to announce that we are beginning an intensive national public education campaign -- aimed at reducing collisions and trespassing. The campaign includes television, radio, print, and billboard public service announcements.

These announcements will grab the viewer's attention. In fact, some people have said maybe they are too intense for television.

Let me say this: If they scare people to save lives, that is good. Maybe next time somebody will be too scared to try to beat the train. Or maybe next time people will be too scared to walk on a train track. If these spots are scary, they are nothing compared to the real thing, and the real tragedies that victims' parents, like Ms. Harvey, face every day.

I want Americans to understand they should never, ever, ever try to beat a train or trespass on tracks.

What's important are that these spots work. So far, we've seen, earlier spots, like these do work. Last year, we kicked-off the campaign in Texas, and fatalities have been reduced by 10 percent.

So, on behalf of Operation Lifesaver, the Association of American Railroads, and the Department of Transportation, I am honored to show you how we will save lives.

I want to thank you on behalf of the visionary and vigilant Department of Transportation for your commitment to safety. Thank you.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES
MAY 13, 1997
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Yesterday, I dedicated the new air traffic control tower at National Airport in Washington. I told the controllers I had been, the week before, at the dedication of the Franklin Roosevelt Memorial. It is located right in the flight path of National Airport.

The President and many distinguished leaders all spoke. As they did -- one plane, after another, after another flew over. I could see people looking at me, thinking: can't the Transportation Secretary do something about the noise?

And I thought, Franklin Roosevelt, the President who built National, who knew planes were not noise, but the sounds of freedom -- is he smiling down on me now!

It was under President Roosevelt when the federal government began funding airport development. And it was under President Truman, 50 years ago, when FAA made the first grant.

Fifty years, 33,000 grants, and $24 billion later -- we have a system better than any in the world ... that 600 million passengers a year use, that has created jobs and connected our cities and grown our local economies, and yet we've barely begun.

For I believe in the same way highways connected our country in the last half of this century, in the first half of the next century it will be aviation that connects the world. It will be aviation that makes transportation, as I have long believed, more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. But about people -- our mobility, our choices, our opportunities.

- more -

Your Association's leadership has made it very clear to us that with the growth in air transportation and the increased security concerns, not everyone in this room believes we have enough money in the budget for airports. I thank you for making your case so forthrightly.

But I am a rarity among Transportation Secretaries. Not since the first, Alan Boyd, of 30 years ago, has a Transportation Secretary been able to say: the United States government will balance a budget.

The easy part of holding public office, I have learned, is handing out government checks. The hard part, and the reason we have had deficits for 30 years, is deciding not to write checks.

When you need to close a military base that is in someone's backyard; or downsize the Transportation Department, as we have done by 10,000 people; or move 3 million people off of welfare, as we have done in the last four years; or find savings in Medicare -- that is the difficult part.

And to do so while investing in our future -- providing more for education, and research, as the President wants -- and providing tax relief for many of you. Well, that is the very difficult part.

It took courage for the President and the Congress to agree on a budget blueprint. But I can tell you the President and Vice President believe America is more prosperous when we have fiscal discipline, and when we invest in our future.

We have evidence. In the last four years, 12 million new jobs have been created. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. The airline industry has rebounded as the economy has rebounded -- last year was their most profitable year -- ever. Because employed Americans fly, and unemployed ones do not.

The President says everyone will find something that he or she disagrees with in the budget. And everyone could find something he or she wishes were in the budget.

The reality of that is right in this room.

When we presented our 1998 budget, we trimmed airport improvement grants. We did it to balance the budget. We did it because we thought if there is one area with the greatest opportunity to raise alternative financing it is airports. For federal grants represent less than 13 percent of revenue sources at the 150 largest airports.

And we know small airports -- so many of you -- are more dependent on federal help, so we proposed holding that funding steady. And let me say this: in an era of balanced budgets, holding your own is doing well.

Let me also say: I consider this an opportunity for airports. Right now, in Washington, Congress is spending much of its time on a bill that will dictate highway and transit funding in the next six years.

As they do so, I believe the aviation community has an open window to forge a consensus regarding the future of its financing; the future of airport grants; and more broadly, the overall funding of the FAA.

Congress created a Commission to recommend what to do. I met with the commissioners, during their first meeting last month. They are committed to finding answers, and I believe with the historic budget deal it added even more incentive to come together.

The very able Norm Mineta is the chairman. Airports will have a strong voice, for the commission includes Chip Barclay of your Association. And we have several members representing the interests of large and small airports: Leonard Griggs, of St. Louis; Gene Smith of Columbus, Mississippi; William Bacon, of Rapid City, South Dakota; and Justice Revis Ortique, of the New Orleans Aviation Board.

And I ask all of you to be part of the process. We want all opinions, so this is done the right way.

When I was Federal Highway Administrator, one of the wonderful things we did was to cut red tape, and to find ways to innovatively finance highways. Today, we are seeing billions of dollars in highways being built two and three years sooner at no extra cost to the taxpayer.

I am very proud to tell you, we have begun a similar program for airports. We will begin working with five airports to find innovative ways to make federal dollars go farther.

Tomorrow, it will be my 90th day as Transportation Secretary. What has struck me, as I've traveled the country, and last week traveled with the President in Latin America -- is the national resource, the treasure if you will, that our aviation system is.

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In the last 90 days, we have signed nine aviation agreements opening our skies -- from Costa Rica to Singapore. Let me repeat that: in 90 days, nine agreements, that allow unrestricted service between our countries.

We know liberalized trade works. Since we signed an aviation agreement with Canada in 1994, the number of passengers flying between our countries -- and passing through your airports -- is up 28 percent; 17 cities that did not have non-stop service to Canada now do; and fares are down more than 20 percent.

In the last 90 days, we also have continued our efforts to improve safety, my number one priority.

Clearly, we're working to modernize the air traffic control system, buying equipment in half the time it used to take; we want to hire 500 more controllers; following up on the Gore Commission, we're installing more bomb detection equipment.

One year ago was the terrible ValuJet crash. We are recommitting ourselves to everything possible to prevent another tragedy. We've strengthened restrictions on transporting hazardous materials and increased our scrutiny of start-up airlines.

We've also implemented the commuter rule, bringing one level of safety to all scheduled carriers.

Ambitious, yes. But when one-and-a-half million people pass through your airports, every day in every way, expecting to fly safely and land on time; when nine million people depend on aviation for their jobs; we better be, as I always say, a visionary and vigilant Department of Transportation.

And, yes, I need your help to meet the goals I established 90 days ago when I took the oath of office I said that 1) safety will be the number one priority of the DOT; 2) that we will invest in our infrastructure to ensure that America's transportation system meets the needs and desires of the American people in the 21st century; 3) that we will use a common-sense approach to running a department so that it works better and costs less.

Let me close on this. Of all the things I've done in the last 90 days, one of the most remarkable was when I went to Philadelphia, with President Clinton and the former Presidents for the summit on volunteerism.

President Clinton announced that the Transportation Department, with our partners in the private sector, will reach out to a million students.

- more -

I call it the Garrett A. Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program, in honor of the inventor of the traffic signal.

I'm asking my 100,000 employees to go into our schools, to have a conversation with our children, to tell them about what they do.

I want men and women in the Coast Guard, in their beautiful uniforms, describing search-and-rescue missions. I want professional pilots visiting classrooms. I want to bring back the days, when mom and dad would take the little ones to the airport on Sunday to watch the planes land.

For as I look to build the transportation system of the 21st century — unless we have the workforce to help us -- we will not be as good as America should be.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was never in my wildest dreams that one day I would serve in the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States on all matters of transportation. But in my life, I had a lot of people who cared.

There are a lot of young people, who need to know, yes, that they can, too; yes, what we do is important; and, yes, with them and all of you, the best days for our country's transportation system are yet to come.

Thank you, very much.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING NATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT
ON UNDER AGE DRINKING
MAY 12, 1997
CHEVEY CHASE, MARYLAND

I know some of you came to Washington because a drunk driver killed someone you loved. Or someone you love is an alcoholic, and you're afraid they will kill someone. And so, like it or not, you have to be here.

But let me say this: it is more than love that brought you. It is hurt and anger. You're here at a MADD conference because you are mad, mad enough to say: I will change something in America that I think is wrong.

That is really telling about yourselves. For many of the most significant changes in America have come about because people believe we can be better. It has always been the collective will of we the people that brings about the more perfect union.

Later this week, I will be returning to my alma mater, the University of Arkansas, as the commencement speaker, at the law school, that I entered 20 years ago.

So, yesterday, I looked through a couple of scrapbooks. And do you know that I found some articles and a letter I wrote 20 years ago on why I wanted to become a lawyer?

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream. We all live in a land that perpetuates democratic ideas and principles. But for many this dream is only a hope and not a certainty.

And I wished that my voice be heard not solely through the casting of a ballot or protest, but in the development and administration of these principles.

- more -

My point is this: after you get mad, and protest -- then follow-up. Then act. I want you to see yourself as a figure in a dream, too.

For if the founding mothers of MADD and all the mothers and students who followed hadn't gotten mad enough in the past 16 years to help put in place their dream of a minimum drinking age law, 16,000 Americans would not be alive today.

For if President Johnson 30 years ago hadn't been angry enough to say we need to reduce the slaughter on our highways, and therefore started a Transportation Department; and if lawmakers hadn't enacted laws so Americans buckle up; and if automakers hadn't worked to make cars safer, today we'd be seeing 120,000 deaths a year on our highways. Not the 40,000 we see, which is still far too many.

When President Clinton asked me to become Secretary of Transportation, I was in a position to fulfill that 20-year old dream of mine and develop and administer principles that would make our country better. And I told the American people that my number one priority would be safety.

Safety would be the North Star, which guides me, and ultimately which judges the Department of Transportation family.

And one of my first acts was to ask Congress to increase our budget for highway safety programs. Specifically, I asked for a 25 percent increase, in the next six years, so we can, among other things, expand our aggressive campaign to crack down on drunk and drugged driving.

Let me put this in perspective: in Washington, we are, for the first time in 30 years, going to balance a budget. That means most budgets are being cut, not added to. So asking for 25 percent more money is doing very well.

Then, a little less than a month ago, I went to the White House, joined by about half of all the former Transportation Secretaries, my predecessors.

I set a national goal to increase seat belt use. Today, seven of 10 Americans buckle up, and I want the 21st century driver to wear seat belts.

Airplanes don't take off until everyone is wearing seat belts, so why should we drive cars without buckling up?

I want every state to pass primary seat belt laws, where an officer can stop a driver or passenger for no other reason than they aren't buckled.

Clearly these laws work. States with them have, on average, increased their seat belt use rates 15 percentage points.

When I call your state, will you stand up and keep standing -- California, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, and the District of Columbia. These teenagers live in states that already have primary seat belt laws. I wish all of you were standing. For I want every state to have them. Is everyone with me on that? Thank you.

I have also spent time on an issue that is of growing concern to our nation -- aggressive drivers. When you see cars driving twice the speed limits, and tailgating, and cutting in front of trucks, and running red lights -- you wonder: who do these people think they are?

We want to be as aggressive as the aggressive drivers. So two weeks ago, I met with law enforcement officers to crack down on aggressive drivers in this area. I hope you do the same with your local police.

And there's more for us -- you and I -- to do on impaired driving. Thanks to you -- thanks to the actions of teenagers reaching millions of other teenagers -- we are doing an awful lot better than when I was a teenager.

But this is a pretty large room. And if I filled four rooms, with this many young people, that is how many youth we lose a year, because of drunk driving.

So, yes, there's more to do -- for teenagers and adults. We have set a very ambitious goal of reducing alcohol-related fatalities from 17,000 today to 11,000 by the year 2005.

One strategy to get there is to have all states set their illegal blood alcohol limit to .08. I know this is a very important goal for MADD.

Another strategy I share with MADD is zero-tolerance for drivers under the age of 21 -- for all of you. In 1995, when fewer than half the states had zero tolerance laws, President Clinton called on Congress to enact legislation making it the law of the land. They did.

We need driving laws consistent with drinking laws. Since it's illegal in every state for young people to buy alcoho, it should be illegal to drive with any alcohol.

As a result of the President's efforts, 39 states and the District of Columbia now have zero tolerance laws, and those that do not will lose federal highway funds.

And there is something else MADD and the President believe: we must do more to stop your peers from using drugs and driving. For two-thirds of teenagers -- your friends -- say they personally know someone who has driven a car after using marijuana or another drug.

Drug use among teenagers is very troubling to the President, because you are our future. The President called on General McCaffrey and I, and some of the other agencies in the Cabinet, to see what more we can do.

We want to experiment with the concept of drug testing in a few states for new drivers' license applicants and in post-crash situations. For example, a state may be interested in a voluntary testing program, for which participants get insurance discounts.

And we want to expand drug prevention and education programs.

This a problem too big for any group, or even any nation to solve. I was with the President last week in Mexico, when our two countries signed a Joint Alliance Against Drugs.

The President pointed out our nation has less than five percent of the world's population, yet we consume about half the drugs. So we need to fight this problem -- every day, every way, and I hope the President and I can count on you to be with us on this.

Let me end on this. You probably have heard about Washington politicians, not always getting along. But when it comes to youth, let me say this: this nation's leaders, always come together.

If you look at the underage drinking laws, it has been a Republican President and a Democratic Congresses, and a Democratic President with a Republican Congress, that came together to pass them.

- more -

The week before last, when the President and the Congress struck a deal to balance the budget, they cut a lot of programs. But what was not cut -- was education. Congress said yes to the President's goal of making education America's number priority. And they said yes to extending health insurance to 5 million uninsured children.

And a few weeks ago, in Philadelphia, when President Clinton and Vice President Gore wanted to encourage more volunteerism, so more of us go into schools and mentor at-risk kids -- who was there? Every former President -- Republican and Democrat.

So, when you come up with your platform, and then visit your congressmen, it doesn't matter their party, or your party. What matters are your ideas.

What matters is that you are mad, and that like a Rodney Slater of 20 years ago, you use that energy to place yourself as the figure in a dream to make our country better.

So, tomorrow, tell the members of Congress everything you think they should know.

And, then, send me a copy of your platform. I need to learn, too.

Thank you very much.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
DAISY BATES SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON
MAY 15, 1997
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

Only a loving mother can brag about a son like that. Every son should be so lucky to have a mother-in-law like I do. Thank you.

As proud as she is of me, every parent in this room is as proud of our seven scholars. I suspect you learned discipline and hard work from your parents. They've probably nagged you a little along the way, too, so I won't get on your case -- too much. But I want to ask a favor: You've done well in high school, will you do as well in college? Do I hear everyone agreeing with that?

Well, I have another mother in this room. When Cassandra and I first moved to Little Rock, back in 1980, we used to go and sit at Mrs. Bates' table.

We would just listen -- you know. She was as much a mother figure to me as anyone. Just a key person, who I relied on as a young person getting involved in the political process, and needing the benefit of her wisdom.

And for me it was always such a wonderful chore to be able to go to the store for her, to take her to places with us. She was actually my date on one or two occasions. Do you remember that, Mrs. Bates?

Like all of you I won a scholarship to college, too. Your scholarships are free, but I had a string attached to mine: I played football.

The other day, I was going through my college scrapbook, and do you know, I found some articles and a letter I wrote 20 years ago on why I wanted to become a lawyer?

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream.

- more -

If you don't mind, I'd like to read you what I wrote when I was about your age:

I said, "we all live in a land that perpetuates democratic ideas and principles ... these are the characteristics of the American dream, but for many this dream is only a hope and not a certainty, only a dream and not a reality."

And I wished, this is exactly what I said "that my voice be heard not solely through the casting of a ballot or protest, but in the development and administration of these principles."

Who would have ever believed, 20 years later, I would be in Washington, a member of the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States, a fellow son of Arkansas, on the principles of our country.

Who would have ever believed that? Mrs. Bates -- that is who. Just as she believes every one of you -- every one -- will one day be a figure in your own dream.

I wrote what I did when I was your age, because I grew up in an Arkansas that, as President Clinton says, at the time seemed to be a horrible moment, but turned out to be a magic one in our history.

Forty years ago, nine brave children, with Mrs. Bates as their den mother, were figures in the dream of civil rights. With the help of troops sent in by President Eisenhower, they dodged violent mobs, and the Arkansas National Guard, that Governor Faubus sent in, to attend what had been all-white Central High School.

All they wanted was what all of you are getting with your scholarships today -- the opportunity for a better education.

Because of what those nine and Mrs. Bates did, I was able finally to attend an integrated high school in Marianna. I remember being excited, because I always wanted to know how I would stack up.

But there wasn't racial harmony. It was bad, well, so bad that I and most of the other African-Americans boycotted school for half my junior year.

But out of the bad, finally came good. And what I came to learn was that integrating the schools wasn't just good for African-American children; it was good for white children. It's like years earlier, when we had the Emancipation

Proclamation that not only freed African-Americans. It freed so many whites as well. Because it freed them of the burden of having to provide for the well being of a people.

And let me say this: integrating schools proved that all people cannot only go to school together, but can live together, and solve problems together. What's different about Arkansas today than 40 years ago, is that we now realize that we are a community, where unless we all do well, none of us do well.

We'll have a big celebration for the 40th in September. And I can remember 10 years ago, when we celebrated the 30th. All nine came home from their different lives across the globe -- all successful.

And do you remember, Mrs Bates, that the NAACP Board was in town and President Clinton spoke. He was Governor then. He told a story about how he had just visited Chelsea's school in Little Rock, and he was thinking about how he wanted her to get a good education, but as important how he wanted all the children in her class to do well, too.

And it wasn't just for them. He said it was for America, because we're in a global competition, and this country will rise or fall on its brains.

Mrs. Bates, I don't know if you know this, but somebody at the Transportation Department pointed this out to me. On September 9th, 1957, the day soldiers turned the Little Rock Nine away, something else historic happened that would forever change this country.

The very first Japanese automobile entered our country for sale here. Arkansas was on the front page of every paper in the country -- and the only thing about the car was a little picture, buried in the middle of the paper.

But that car was followed, eventually, by millions and millions more. Taking good-paying jobs out of our country, because others were able to build better products for less money than we.

Why am I telling you this? Because I know whose job it is to make sure in the 21st century our country can compete -- and win -- in the global market. It is your job.

You need to prove -- once and for all -- those truths that Mrs. Bates always knew: that African-Americans can lead as well as follow; can teach as well as be taught; can employ as well as be employed; can govern as well as be governed.

There is a reason a company like Southwestern Bell is interested in giving you scholarships. They figured it out. They know we don't have a child to waste. They know there is a labor shortage coming.

I told you there are no strings attached to your scholarships, but after seeing Mrs. Bates, and remembering the wonderful wisdom she passed on to me -- I've changed my mind.

I'm attaching a string.

After you settle on campus, I want you to find a way to volunteer, by mentoring a child less fortunate, by serving in your community to make it a better place.

Of all the things I have seen as Secretary of Transportation, one of the most remarkable was when President Clinton was joined by three former Presidents in Philadelphia to ask America to volunteer. And as he believes, so we must all believe that "we can never fulfill our own ambitions until we help our brothers and sisters to fulfill theirs."

So, my string is very easy. Find a volunteer job. Is that a deal?

You are good kids, with so much potential, who are going to figure in your own dreams. Our best days are yet ahead of us. Thank you so much, for the honor to be with you.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 16, 1997

Contact: Lorie Dankers
202-366-5565

MEDIA ADVISORY

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater will be joined by the ten operating administrations of the department to host an Open House celebrating the 30th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Transportation on Monday, May 19, 1997.

The Open House will include remarks by Secretary Slater in the DOT Plaza at 1:00 p.m., followed by a public reception. Exhibits and technology demonstrations from each of the modes within the Department will be showcased as well.

This event is one of many Open Houses throughout U.S. DOT offices nationwide. It is designed to welcome the public and transportation community and to share the many departmental accomplishments and programs.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR DOT 30TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE

Monday, May 19, 1997

All events will take place at the DOT Plaza
U.S. Department of Transportation Headquarters
400 Seventh Street, SW
Metro stop: L'Enfant Plaza

Noon - 3:00 pm	Modal Exhibits on Display from DOT's Operating Administrations
1:00 p.m.	Kick-Off Remarks by Secretary Slater

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 16, 1997

Contact: Lorie Dankers
202-366-5565

MEDIA ADVISORY

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater will kick-off *Buckle-Up, America! Week* at a safety checkpoint Monday, May 19, at 10:30 a.m. Secretary Slater will be joined by law enforcement officials and traffic safety professionals to encourage parents to buckle up their children.

Buckle-Up, America! Week is May 18-26. It is a public safety campaign aimed at raising awareness about the dangers and unlawfulness of transporting unbuckled children. An estimated 1,400 children die each year in vehicle crashes because they are not buckled up properly. Last month, the department unveiled a plan to increase national safety belt use to 85 percent by the year 2000.

WHAT: Kick-Off of *Buckle-Up, America! Week*

WHO: Rodney E. Slater, U.S. Secretary of Transportation
Ricardo Martinez, M.D., Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Traffic Safety Professionals
Law Enforcement Officials

WHEN: Monday, May 19
10:30 a.m.

WHERE: 5260 Western Avenue (DC-MD Line)
Washington, DC

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SCHOOL OF LAW COMMENCEMENT
MAY 17, 1997
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

It is wonderful and a great honor to be back here at my alma mater -- to be with so many good friends -- and where so many very moving memories come to mind.

Before I say anything else, let me say *"congratulations."*

This is your day. You've made it. Past your undergraduate degrees, past your LSAT's, past your exams -- and *now, you've just got to pass the bar exam*!

Today you take not just the knowledge you've gained -- but the friends you've made and the values you've strengthened here in Fayetteville.

There's an undercurrent of sadness as well as joy to this moment. But when you reflect on leaving, remember one thing -- *and I'm standing here as living proof*:

You can come home again, and Fayetteville will always feel like home.

As you leave here you will be carrying high ideals and values -- because this law school embodies them.

That was one reason why I chose to come here myself -- 20 years ago -- fresh out of Eastern Michigan University.

I can hardly believe it's been 20 years. So the other day, as I was thinking about what to say today, I looked through a couple of scrapbooks. And do you know that I found some articles and a letter I wrote 20 years ago on why I wanted to be a lawyer?

- more -

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream. We all live in a land that perpetuates democratic ideas and principles. But for many this dream is only a hope and not a certainty.

And I wished that my voice be heard not solely through the casting of a ballot or a protest, but in the development and administration of these principles. And the law I learned at this great and bold institution gave me the tools for doing so.

I'm proud that my alma mater was the first law school in the South to admit African-Americans -- in 1948 -- without benefit of court order or threat of force or even protests and demonstrations.

The doors just opened to the first African-American student to attend this law school, Silas Hunt, who died before he could complete his degree. And then to others who became my friends and mentors: George Haley; Federal District Judge George Howard; Wiley Branton, the former Dean of Howard Law School in Washington, D.C.; Jackie Shropshire and Chris Mercer of Little Rock; and many other friends of mine.

Every one of you is blessed. You have gotten a good education. It will give you access to a good life and to a future limited only by what you want to achieve.

Make no mistake education is the key to the future. The Washington politicians, who you've probably heard don't always get along, even they agree.

Two weeks ago, when President Clinton and the Congress struck a deal to balance the federal budget, they made many cuts. But what wasn't cut was education. They agreed on the President's goal of making education America's number one priority.

But there's more to it. You, the generation that will carry us into the 21st century, must accept the responsibility that comes with opportunity. You must give back to society. You owe something to your communities and families and neighbors for your good fortune.

A few weeks ago I attended a remarkable event, in Philadelphia. It was a leadership summit called by President Clinton and Vice President Gore to encourage more volunteerism. You know who came? Three former Presidents -- Republican and Democrat.

They came as did many from private business, government, and community activist groups because they know that no government is able to help all those people who are at risk. We must have volunteer efforts like what the President wants to help school kids learn to read and to mentor kids on the brink of falling into trouble.

"But how do we fashion the future?" Miller Williams asked at the President's Inaugural. "Who can say how except in the minds of those who will call it Now? The children. The children. And how does our garden grow? With waving hands -- oh, rarely in a row -- and flowering faces. And brambles, that we can no longer allow."

So I call on each of you, as you settle into the life of young lawyers, to heed this call. Volunteer your talents and energies in meaningful ways. Give something back to those less fortunate than yourselves. Place yourself as the figure in that dream I had 20 years ago to make our country better.

The law is one of the foundation stones and guardians of our freedom.

You are entering a profession whose integrity and reputation depends on the honor and devotion that we ourselves bring to its practice.

All of you will, I hope, have times and occasions in your careers when you will be able to touch on -- and passionately engage -- issues that are important to you.

I know as a young man I imagined myself grappling with great questions of justice and jurisprudence -- and I have been blessed to engage some cases like that in my time.

But I don't want to romanticize the profession for you today.

A great deal of the law day-to-day involves the basic tasks of drafting and enforcing contracts and filing routine pleas and motions in ordinary cases.

It's the kind of nitty-gritty legal work that Abraham Lincoln did very well for more than two decades in Illinois. This experience helped prepare him to run for President and meet the challenge of saving the Union.

Believe me, it took a good lawyer to draft the Emancipation Proclamation.

But the truth is, many of your responsibilities from today on will not turn on legal principles of profound significance. Earning a living, building a reputation, meeting the love of your life and supporting a family -- these are the business of life.

And if you take up these responsibilities joyfully -- care for neighbors and strangers and for our country -- then you will send out ripples of hope and decency that will make America better.

Whatever you do, however you use your legal training, I urge you *to throw yourself into your work with all the energy and creativity you can muster*.

Follow Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes advice: *"Inflict yourselves on life."*

Set your sights high. Live up to the very best traditions that the law represents. Set out to do your life's work so well that no one could do better.

Because every single one of you is carrying your own American dream -- in your heads and your hands and your hearts.

And, always, always remember the words of Maya Angelou.:

"Lift up your eyes upon this day breaking for you. Give birth again to the dream. Women, children, men, take it into the palms of your hands. Mold it into the shape of your most private need. Sculpt it into the image of your most public self. Lift up your hearts each new hour holds new chances for new beginnings. Here on the pulse of this new day you may have the grace to look up and out and into your sister's eyes, and into your brother's face, your country and say simply very simply with hope good morning."

Thank you and God bless you.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
HALL HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT
MAY 18, 1997

Thank you, Lashad (Slater). Only a family member can brag about a Slater like Lashad just did.

To the Class of '97, your parents, your friends, your teachers -- it is good to be home.

As proud as I am of Lashad, every relative -- every parent -- in this auditorium is as proud of all our graduates. I suspect you learned discipline and hard work from your mom or dad. They've probably nagged you a little along the way, too, so I won't get on your case -- too much -- today.

But I want to ask a favor: You've done well in high school. Well enough, I understand, that you've earned $750,000 in college scholarships ... well enough to have gotten into all kinds of technical school ... well enough that many of you already have jobs lined up.

My favor is this: as well as you've done in high school, will you do as well next year, where ever you are? Do I hear everyone agreeing with that?

Like a lot of you, I didn't come from a rich home. My father worked five jobs to keep up. And my parents weren't educated, but they knew enough that if we were to get a better job than they had, and pursue the American dream, I needed more years in school than they had.

So like a lot of you, I won a scholarship to college. And I had a string attached to mine: I played football.

Well, the other day, I was going through my college scrapbook, and I found an article from the last program of my last football game at Eastern Michigan.

Lashad found out what I said 10 years ago when I came to Hall, and I found out what I said 20 years ago. And I want to share it with you.

Twenty years ago, I said that "an athlete does not stop representing his school when he takes off his pads for the last time. Twenty years from today I will be a graduate of the school, and I will still be proud of that fact."

Class of '97 -- in 20 years, you won't be wearing orange and white, but you'll always be a Warrior. And you'll be darn proud of it -- I know it.

I also found a letter that I wrote 20 years ago on why I wanted to become a lawyer.

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream.

If you don't mind, I'd like to read you what I wrote when I was about your age:

I said, "we all live in a land that perpetuates democratic ideas and principles ... these are the characteristics of the American dream, but for many this dream is only a hope and not a certainty, only a dream and not a reality."

And I wished (this is exactly what I said) "that my voice be heard not solely through the casting of a ballot or protest, but in the development and administration of these principles."

Who would have ever believed, 20 years later, I would be in Washington, a member of the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States, a fellow son of Arkansas, on the principles of our country.

Who would have ever believed that? My parents ... my friends ... my teachers -- that is who. Just as they believe every one of you -- every one -- will one day be a figure in your own dream.

When President Clinton was Governor, back in 1991 -- he spoke at a Baccalaureate in Little Rock. Unfortunately, it was at that other high school -- Central -- not here.

What he talked about, I remember, was that of the classmates that he met 20 years after they graduated, the saddest ones are not those who had failed. The saddest classmates were the ones who never tried to be what they wanted to do.

It's sad, he said, to find the person is not 17 or 18 anymore, but is 47 or 48 and has lived with a dream he or she never tired to realize.

When I wrote what I did when I was your age, that I wanted to see myself as a figure in a dream, it was because I grew up in an Arkansas that had some horrible moments.

Until I was in 10th grade, I went to segregated schools in Lee County. I remember when the School Board changed the rules how excited I was to attend an integrated high school. I remember being excited, because I always wanted to know how I would stack up.

But there wasn't racial harmony. It was bad, well, so bad that most of the other African-American teenagers and I boycotted school for half my junior year.

But out of the bad, came good. And what I came to learn was that integrating the schools wasn't just good for African-American children; it was good for white children.

And let me say this: integrating schools proved that all people cannot only go to school together, but can live together, and solve problems together. What's different about Arkansas today than when Hall High School was created in the '50s, is that we now realize that we are a community. Unless we all do well, none of us do well.

I just don't want Lashad Slater doing well. If I just cared about Lashad, I would have stayed in Washington, and called him up on the phone to tell him congratulations on his graduation. I came here, because I want all of Lashad's friends to do well, too.

And it is not just for your sake. It is for America's sake,

I know whose job it is to make sure in the 21st century our country can compete -- and win -- in the global market. It is <u>your</u> job.

So, when you think about yourself as a figure in a dream, I want to offer a little advice. Your life will be happier and more rewarding if you don't put yourself in the dream, based on how much money you'll make.

You never heard Martin Luther King say his dream is how much money he can pocket, did you?

Put yourself is a dream, where you can serve people, and your community. Put yourself in a dream where you make an America that is ever greater than the America your grew up in.

Of all the things I have seen as Secretary of Transportation, one of the most remarkable was when President Clinton was joined by three former Presidents in Philadelphia to ask America to volunteer. And as he believes, so we must all believe that "we can never fulfill our own ambitions until we help our brothers and sisters to fulfill theirs."

Something your teachers told me was that -- this class was not only bright ... and not only won the girl's state basketball championship ... but that you volunteer.

That between your academics, your extracurricular activities, and your jobs -- so many of you still found time to work at Children's Hospital, or at the zoo. So many of you tutor, and babysit, and help out in the neighborhoods.

So, when I go back to Washington, and tell the President I visited with you -- is it okay to tell him I recruited the entire Hall Class of '97 to volunteer?

And one last point, because I'm the Transportation Secretary now, and I know you are going to be a happy bunch after you graduate next week.

But teenagers, don't drink and drive, do they?

You are good kids, with so much potential, who are going to figure in your own dreams. Our best days are yet ahead of us. Thank you so much, for the honor to be with you.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY
MAY 19, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thank you, Mort, it's an inspiration to know you were here 30 years ago.

Let me ask, first, those who also were at the Department 30 years ago, will you raise your hands. This has been your home for 30 years -- through crisis, and calm, and celebration -- and I ask that the rest of the family join me in saluting our founding members. ***Lead Applause***

I have met with several of the veterans. I seek them out, because they have seen all previous secretaries, and if any one can give me advice on how I might measure up, clearly it is them!

I also have been meeting with young people -- encouraging them to pursue careers in transportation. Last month, President Clinton announced at the volunteer summit in Philadelphia, our Department's commitment to reach a million youngsters. I know you will join me in our effort, so I asked students from Hine Junior High to be with us. Would you raise your hands, so we can applaud our future. ***Lead applause***.

This anniversary is, above all, a tribute. A tribute to your commitment to making as our theme says: a visionary and vigilant Transportation Department.

And we're celebrating, not only here, but across the country.

There are 15 open houses at air traffic facilities in villages across Alaska. In Seattle, there's a party in the middle of downtown, showcasing a clean bus, a Coast Guard boat, and an air bag demonstration.

In Kansas City, we're breaking ground on a DOT building. There's a picnic in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a town hall meeting with pilots in Los Angeles.

In New York City, Gordon Linton is at Penn Station commemorating art in transit ... while at JFK International, FAA is hosting 50 students from Queens ... and MARAD has opened the doors at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

In dozens more communities, we're celebrating -- today, we're even premiering a new home page for the Internet community.

And there's plenty to celebrate. For in 30 years, we have come together as a family to make as Lyndon Johnson asked us to do: "a transportation system worthy of America."

We have 600 million passengers flying our skies. And we played a part in that -- planning and building the airport system, planning and operating an air traffic control system, unmatched anywhere.

We built the great Interstate system -- unmatched anywhere, that is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It has connected our cities, and grown our economy, and provided opportunities for all Americans.

Today, 10,000 fewer people die a year on our roads than 30 years ago. We have a vibrant national freight railroad system -- moving traffic that could not have been imagined 30 years ago. We've opened aviation markets. We're, again, producing ships for export.

For 30 years, the Coast Guard has carried on its mission extraordinarily: saving lives, responding to those in trouble, preventing billions of dollars in property loss.

President Johnson would be proud to know we our working closely with our neighbors at HUD. He would say we're doing right. We ought to provide public transportation for former welfare recipients. That is what a great society does.

I say to you, clearly this Transportation Department can play a leading role in President Clinton's agenda. But it's up to us -- to you and me -- to think not as transportation professionals of the 20th century, but of the 21st century.

I say to you, we can in the next five to 10 years, accomplish as much as what has occurred in the last 30 years. For what I see in the DOT family are people who look to the future, who want our country to move forward, who are ready to lead.

I see people who can say with pride, we've had a good 30 years, and we have yet better roads to travel ahead.

Thank you and happy anniversary!

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
OPERATION ABC: MOBILIZING AMERICA TO BUCKLE UP CHILDREN
MAY 19, 1997
WASHINGTON,D.C.

Today, I am very pleased to launch Operation ABC: Mobilizing America to Buckle Up Children.

Over the next week, law enforcement officers from more than 1,000 communities, in all 50 states, will be hard at work making sure children are properly buckled in the back seats of cars. Assisting them will be community groups, state agencies, and officials from my Department.

Now, let me speak first as a parent. I have a strong-willed four-year old, who stiffens her body every time I try to buckle her. So, I know very well the problems of buckling children.

It is easy to think, well, we're only driving a short distance, I'll let her have her way. And it's easy to think: I'm in a hurry, and nothing will happen.

I say ask the parents of the 1,800 children who died and 286,000 who were injured -- needlessly -- last year because adults did not take the responsibility to buckle children properly.

Five weeks ago, at the White House, I unveiled President Clinton's Plan to increase seat belt use by all Americans.

As Transportation Secretary, it astonishes me to think that while every car made in the last three decades has had seat belts; and every state and the District of Columbia have child safety seat laws -- 40 percent of our children ride unprotected.

Forty percent of American adults are not obeying the law. They aren't buckling their children. We can do better. Buckle up.

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I know that I cannot meet the President's goal for America, I cannot make our children safer without the hard work of all of the people you see on this platform. And all the people they represent.

Let me say this. High visibility enforcement clearly works. Belt use rates in Canada and the United States used to be around the same. Then Canada began implementing special traffic enforcement provisions. And today, 9 out of 10 Canadians buckle up, but only 7 out of 10 Americans do. This is a great nation. We can do better.

So, on behalf of President Clinton, I thank our nation's law enforcement officers -- the men and women who are spearheading this effort. I thank our nation's governors and mayors, and all the leaders in the Air Bag Safety Campaign. Together, we will make this country safer for our children, the future of America.

Thank you.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRTARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
NATIONAL FORUM ON DRUG CONTROL
MAY 20, 1997
WASHINGTON,D.C.

I wanted to drop by, and make a few observations, because my Department oversees the largest drug and alcohol testing program in the world.

First, the good news is that since our program started in 1991, we have seen a steady decrease in drug use by transportation workers. Eight million transportation workers, who have safety-sensitive jobs, such as pilots and railroads engineers, are in our random drug testing program. The program goes beyond testing -- any worker who tests positive is referred to a substance abuse professional.

This program, I am proud to say, is a model for other drug-testing initiatives, in the United States and around the world. We are now working with the governments of Mexico and Canada to help them implement the program for foreign drivers entering the United States. This program has been upheld in the Courts because it balances the rights of employees with those of the traveling public.

And let me add, that we were very pleased this year that the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy emphasized drug testing needs to be a key component in drug-free work place programs -- along with education, prevention, and interdiction. For we clearly feel our drug-free workplace program contributes to making our transportation system the safest in the world.

Second, let me say something about teenagers. Drug use among teenagers is so troubling to President Clinton, he called on General McCaffrey and I, and some of the other agencies in the Cabinet, to see what more we can do.

The numbers are startling: for instance, two-thirds of teenagers say they personally know someone who has driven a car after using marijuana.

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So, we want to experiment with drug testing new drivers' license applicants. A state may, for example, be interested in a voluntary testing program, for which participants get insurance discounts. The President has proposed $2 million in 1998 for a few pilot projects.

Just as efforts to convince teenagers that drinking and driving don't mix have had positive results, I think we would find the same results here.

My final point is with regards to the Coast Guard, which works so hard to interdict drugs on our waterways. Because of their work, to keep drugs out of this country and away from our children, last year they kept 195 million cocaine doses off the streets of America.

I will be at the Coast Guard Academy tomorrow, to present the commencement speech. And just as President Clinton did last year, when he spoke there, I will reconfirm our commitment to provide them with the support that they need to continue their important work. And the support is significant -- we're asking for a 15 percent increase in the budget for next year.

So, I believe we, in the visionary and vigilant U.S. Department of Transportation, have sent a firm, consistent signal to the nation that illegal drug use will not be tolerated within our transportation system.

And I hope we can continue to work with mayors, and your local officials, to make our transportation system safer.

Thank you very much.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
WHITE HOUSE WELFARE TO WORK
PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT
MAY 20, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Good morning, and welcome to the White House. First, let me introduce the Honorable Clarence Harmon, Mayor of St. Louis, who has a real success story to share; and two members of my Department -- Gordon Linton, head of the Federal Transit Administration and Jane Garvey, Acting Federal Highway Administrator. And later we will be joined by Bruce Reed, the President's point man on welfare issues.

This afternoon, President Clinton will meet with CEOs of several companies that are hiring welfare recipients. Let me say, I am pleased two transportation companies were founders of this effort -- United Airlines and UPS.

They know there is not a person to waste. That there is a large pool of talented and capable people, who have not worked before, but who need to. Who want to experience the joys of work. Who want to give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. Who can fill entry-level positions that are hard to fill.

The President also will announce grants that my Department is funding, together with the National Governor's Association, to help states develop transportation plans to get former welfare recipients to their jobs.

Transportation is the "to" in the phrase welfare to work, but it is a "to" that is very much an obstacle today.

Only 6 percent of welfare recipients have cars.

Twenty percent live in rural America, where public transportation is hard to find. And more than half reside in urban America, in central cities, but new jobs are in suburbs.

In Cleveland, for instance, where businesses are screaming for entry-level workers, half those jobs can't be reached by public transportation. In Atlanta, two out of three cannot.

In Boston, which has a wonderful transit system ... where 99 percent of welfare recipients live within a half mile of train stations -- still less than half of employers are that close. So, living near a station doesn't mean you can get to work at the other end.

I have always believed, as does the President, that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about providing opportunity, giving people mobility and access. In urban, suburban, and rural America, we need to do better.

So, two months ago, here at the White House, the President introduced our proposal to construct and reconstruct our highways and transit systems, and support safety and environmental programs. The proposal was for an 11 percent increase in the next six years -- to $175 billion.

We call it NEXTEA -- the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act.

Why crossroads? Because the interstate system that President Eisenhower put in place helped us build a national economy. But today, we are at a crossroads and we have to continue to find an edge as we Americans compete to win on an international stage.

As part of NEXTEA, we would invest $600 million in an access to jobs program for welfare recipients. You'll hear more about that from Gordon. But let me say this, it is one of the Administration's absolute top priorities, and I will work with Congress to address this in the context of the renewal of the highway and transit bill.

I have spoken to a number of members of Congress. They recognize the need, on a bi-partisan basis. In fact, Senators Specter and Lautenberg are introducing a transit bill with a strong welfare-to work reverse commute component.

And I believe we need to step up our efforts on keeping people off welfare to begin with.

It is my hope that as much as $20 billion in NEXTEA will go to minority and women contractors. That would support hundreds of thousands of good, high-paying construction jobs. And we have provisions that allow states to hire welfare recipients and residents of empowerment zones for those jobs.

And it is my hope we can attract young people to pursue high-paying transportation jobs. The President announced in Philadelphia at the summit on volunteerism, that the Transportation Department, with our public and private sector partners, will reach a million children.

I call it the Garrett Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program, after the inventor of the traffic signal.

We want to teach a million children, as I was taught, that a job should be something they aspire to, that will challenge them. They need to understand that the greatest property of a person, is the use of labor, and through labor you can purchase other things to provide happiness.

Let me end on this. It is my Department's 30th anniversary, and I have been meeting with employees who have been around for 30 years. I want to know what makes their jobs so enjoyable that they would stick around! And the issues they brought to my attention -- such as transportation -- are similar to the needs of new employees.

So if we solve the transportation problem, we've helped a lot of people, and that's a very important point. Thank you, and let me turn it over to Gordon Linton.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD COMMENCEMENT
MAY 21, 1997
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT

Admiral Versaw, is first, a parent today, brimming with pride, watching your own son graduate. And second, a graduate yourself, leaving as your legacy an Academy where all Coasties will be trained in the 21st century. We wish you the best.

To Admiral Kramek and team Coast Guard, I am very new at trooping the line. But when I looked out, at the spectacular view, at the fine men and women who wear our country's uniform, well, it is a moment I will remember like nothing else.

And to all the parents, friends and to the Class of 1997 -- I am so honored to be your guest.

We give honor to whom honor is due -- and clearly that is to you.

On Saturday, I spoke at my alma mater, the University of Arkansas. In preparation, I had gone through my school scrapbook. And do you know, I found some articles and a letter I wrote 20 years ago, when I was your age, on why I chose the career I did.

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream developing the policies of our country. Twenty years later, as a member of the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States, yes, mighty dreams do come true.

Do you remember, when you applied to the Academy, you, too, had to write essays on: Why you want to be a Coast Guard officer?

I looked up your writing. Hoping, I guess, to find the next great writer, the next Alex Haley. Let me remind you of a few of your answers.

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One of you had seen stories on TV about Coasties, and wanted to save lives, too. Another said: "As corny as it may sound my principal reason is job satisfaction." That isn't corny, at all.

Another wrote: "The Coast Guard is my top choice because women are given more opportunities than in other services, and are treated with dignity and as the equal of men." Let me add: I am very proud that 21 percent of the graduates of this class are women.

Finally, one of our graduates, who applied from a land far away quoted, as he said, John F. Kennedy of the U.S.A. "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

You know, a few months after President Kennedy said that, he gave a commencement speech at another of the military academies and told the officers: "devoting your life to the service of our country is the greatest contribution that any man could make."

I say to the men and women of the Class of '97, thank you for your commitment to up-hold the Coast Guard's proud motto of Always Ready -- Semper Paratus.

By your commitment, the Coast Guard will be always ready to patrol our coasts and rivers and lakes, always ready to do, as we now do, a search and rescue mission every 8 minutes that saves 5,000 lives a year and almost $4 billion in property. Many of you already showed how ready you are, aboard cutters responding to TWA Flight 800, responding to the call heard around the world.

By your commitment, we will protect our natural resources, so we will have safer ships entering our ports, and cleaner oceans, and commerce can always flow.

By your commitment the Coast Guard will continue its proud tradition, as it has for over 207 years of supporting our country's national security interests.

And by your commitment, the Coast Guard will remain the nation's lead agency for maritime interdiction of drugs, waging a war to keep drugs out of this country. Some of you, I know, already had the taste of the real Guard, boarding vessels containing illegal substances.

Last year, at the commencement, President Clinton committed to the Class of '96 he will provide you with the resources.

This year, when most budgets are being cut, the President asked Congress for a 15 percent increase to support your drug interdiction activities. That is a significant increase, and today I pledge to continue the President's commitment.

You know, it was 50 years ago, this spring, when George Marshall, speaking at a commencement address, unveiled the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe after the war. It was a radical approach, but what Marshall understood then is what you understand today, that the way to end war is to build for a strong peace.

We showed the good of America, sending billions in aid, to our allies and our former enemies alike. We sent help, not to benefit ourselves, but to share our beliefs in democracy.

In 50 years, the world has changed -- yes, it is more democratic than ever; yes, more prosperous than ever; we've wiped out more diseases, and now the President wants to wipe out AIDS; the danger of weapons of mass destruction are receding; our military alliances are deeper -- whether your look to NATO or the great halls of this Academy.

Today, five cadets graduate and will return to their home countries -- Cameroon, Panama, Poland, Russia, and Thailand. And they will return with the knowledge, experience, and close ties, and we will have shown the world, once again, people of different cultures and races can live together as one.

Now, we stand at the threshold of a new century, filled with pomp and promise. For you to play the role in the next century that I expect of those now in positions of command -- you must be wise to history, to science, to economics, to diplomacy, and to adventure. You must think anew, and act anew.

You must create as mighty a dream for the Coast Guard in the next 50 years, as the giant one Secretary Marshall created 50 years ago.

As officers, you must figure out what we will do when our country trades more, as it will. And maritime commerce triples, as it will. You must figure out how do we move from responding to oil spills to preventing them. How do we build a fleet with technologies that, well, Coasties today don't even imagine.

And now it is your turn to give us a lesson on how to build a Coast Guard that costs less and works better.

But, leave here, too, understanding the obligations you have as Americans. Last year, when the Commander-in-Chief came to New London, what impressed him most is meeting Coasties, who were doing volunteer work. And the fact that they could go through this very rigorous program, and still find time to serve their community, demonstrated a unique quality to the President.

Of all the things I've seen in my first 100 days in office, the most remarkable was when President Clinton was joined by three former Presidents in Philadelphia to ask Americans to volunteer. And General Powell was there, and he looked out at 5,000 kids, dressed in t-shirts, ready to clean the streets of Philly, and he said: it's good to have an army again!

Ladies and gentlemen, it's good to have a sea of volunteers. It's good to have Scott Casad, as a Big Brother. And to find Morgan Geiger every Friday showing fifth graders how to make money in the stock market; and Elaine Fitzgerald helping every Wednesday afternoon at the daycare center in the Women's Shelter.

As they believe, so we must all believe that we can never fulfill our ambitions until we help our brothers and sisters to fulfill theirs.

The President announced my goal, for the Department of Transportation to reach a million kids. The President also announced the Defense Department's goal to reach a million kids. Now, we're just a little smaller than our friends at the Pentagon, but with that same big goal, because, well, I dream big. All of you will help me, will you not?

Let me end, by telling you, I once visited the home of Alex Haley, the enlistee who started as a mess boy. And on his cargo ammunition ship plying the Southwest Pacific, he stumbled onto the long road that took him to the writing of "Roots." And I read the great epitaph that Mr. Haley carved on his gravestone: Find the Good and Praise It.

Thank you for letting me find your good, today, and praising it. And, always, always remember, as the leaders in the United States Coast Guard, our nation's lifesavers and guardians of the sea, this is Team Coast Guard: active, reserve, civilian, and auxiliary. Everyone counts. Always find their good and praise it.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE PROPELLER CLUB OF WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 22, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

It's a pleasure to be here, especially on National Maritime Day, when we honor our American Merchant Marine and the vital contributions they make to our economy and national defense.

I had the honor to speak at the Coast Guard Academy yesterday. And I am pleased to announce that on June 16th, I will be speaking at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York -- for their commencement.

I have learned that the first act of the first session of the House of Representatives under the Constitution was a maritime bill. I hope in my first time before the maritime community, I can do as well, today!

While this is my first time, unfortunately, it is one of Admiral Herberger's last, as he retires at the end of next month. But he leaves as his legacy 260 vessels constructed under the shipbuilding loan guarantee program, and the landmark Maritime Security Act, which I will say more about in a minute.

But I want to say on a personal note what a help the Admiral has been to me, in my transition and first 100 days as Secretary. I will miss his wise counsel and able leadership. And we all wish you the very, very best, Admiral.

I also want to say my first personnel decision was to ask a good friend of yours, Michael Huerta, to be my chief of staff. For a long time I've built highways that lead to ports. With Michael at my side, I will be reminded of the need to build the ports that lead to our highways!

I always have believed that transportation is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about providing opportunity for people, giving them mobility, and

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choices. And not only tying our nation together, but extending the sphere of America's influence by tying our world together, as the maritime community does so well.

I have been blessed, to come into a Department, when so many great accomplishments in maritime have already been made.

Four years ago, President Clinton and Congress authorized the National Shipbuilding Initiative. It demonstrated their unity of purpose and their commitment to our maritime industry. As a result, for the first time in 30 years, the United States is building commercial oceangoing ships for export. I can tell you -- proudly -- that the first ship will be delivered in August to Denmark from the Alabama Shipyard.

Then a year ago, the President and Congress gave us the Maritime Security Act, passed with bi-partisan support. As the President says, it "sets the course for America's merchant marine into the 21st century."

It ensures America will continue to have American-flag ships, crewed by loyal American citizens, to meet our nation's defense requirements.

By contracting with U.S.-flag vessels, we gain access to a fleet of modern commercial ships. And we gain access to the sophisticated intermodal transportation system supporting it -- the trains, trucks, and cargo handling equipment.

As one of his last jobs, Admiral Herberger just completed the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement as part of the Act.

This is the plan between the public and private sectors on how everything works during an emergency to give the Department of Defense the access to the network.

And let me say that in my time in office, I will work to make sure Congress funds the Maritime Security Program -- each and every year.

Let me, if you will, discuss a few other policy areas that are important to you and my Department.

First, let me talk about safety, my highest priority at the Department. My

vision for the 21st century are U.S. waters and ports that are the safest, most environmentally sound, and efficient in the world -- all the more difficult a task with the tremendous increases that we are seeing in traffic.

We have learned, over time, that safety solely by regulation does not work. Safety requires a balanced program -- of regulation, partnership, prevention, and people.

The Coast Guard has developed a Prevention Through People program. It is a total systems approach to maritime safety and focuses on the human element, which is the root cause of most marine casualties and pollution incidents.

Many leaders from our nation's shipping and transportation companies have strongly endorsed the program. And I look to it as an important means to prevent accidents from occurring in the first place.

Second, I am aware that shippers and carriers are working with Congress to revise the 1984 Shipping Act. If this was easy to revise, it would have been done before now.

But it is not easy. Different sides sincerely believe that deregulation of shipping would have adverse effects, be it on labor, or small shippers. And we respect that, and we hope to work with the Congress and the maritime community to move forward.

Third, I believe we need a strong U.S.-flag fleet within our own shores.

Forty nations reserve their domestic trade exclusively to their own flag fleet. None has ever conceded the right to regulate its own domestic production or commerce.

As the greatest industrialized and trading nation in the world, America should do the same, and will do no less. So, I will work with Congress to make sure that America reaffirms its commitment to a vigorous domestic maritime industry.

Fourth, I will be spending most of my time working with Congress on the legislation, up for renewal this year, that determines how much the country will invest on surface transportation in the next six years.

The President sent to Congress our plan, which calls for $175 billion. Let me say this: we thought about setting aside an amount of money to deal with ports. But we decided against that, because we thought it would leave everyone fighting over a relatively small piece of the pie. Instead, we chose to give ports broad license to seek funding from virtually all major funding categories.

There are many new ways to fund port projects; to invest in freight facilities; to invest in connections to intermodal facilities; to assist in financing privately owned infrastructure; and to invest in large nationally significant projects, such as the Alameda Corridor at the Port of Los Angeles.

So, I believe ports fared well, and I will be working on a bi-partisan basis to pass the legislation.

We've also assembled an interagency task force, spearheaded by MARAD, that is developing a tool box for our ports to use in going forward with economic expansion. This will tell ports where to go, what to do, and how to get more federal resources.

Fifth and finally, I want to work to achieve reciprocity in maritime services. We have been very successful in signing open skies agreements with other countries, allowing for unrestricted air service.

We can do more with maritime services. We welcome business from other nations to our shores -- and we want their shores open to us on the same terms. I want unrestricted access for America's maritime industry.

Let me end on this. Of all the things I've seen in my first 100 days in office, the most remarkable was when President Clinton was joined by three former Presidents in Philadelphia to ask Americans to volunteer.

In Philadelphia, the President announced my goal, for the Department of Transportation to go into our schools and reach a million kids. I call our program the Garrett Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program, after the inventor of the traffic signal.

At the same time the President announced the Defense Department would reach a million kids, too.

Now, we're just a little smaller than our friends at the Pentagon, but with

that same big goal, because, well, I know how many friends we have in the transportation industry. And you can help us.

I have heard about your Adopt-A-Ship Program, letting school students exchange correspondence with the men and women at sea.

I am asking all of my employees to reach out to our youth, to have a conversation with our children. I hope you join us. I want you to tell them about what you do, to fire them up about transportation, about building and sailing ships, about transporting America's cargoes across the water highways to the world.

There are youth out there who need to know that they can achieve greatness. They need to know that what we do in transportation is important. And yes, that with them -- and all of you -- the best days of our country, as a great maritime nation, are yet to come.

Thank you very much.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
COMMUNITY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS
MAY 23, 1997
BECKLEY, WEST VIRGINIA

Good morning, and it is good to be in West Virginia, again. The last time I came, Congressman Rahall took me white water rafting on the New River, and it was real white water.

We went over a stretch that was rather dramatic, and we decided to do it a second time. One of our people fell out of the boat, and he was down in a sink hole a long, long time, but the Lord answered our prayers and he came up -- finally.

So, this time, when the Congressman asked me to Beckley, do you know he took me this morning to a sunrise prayer service!

We all know how much the Congressman has done in transportation for Beckley, and the Third District, and West Virginia. Because of his leadership, $120 million will be available for the I-73/74 corridor. Because of him, today the Coalfields Expressway is a high priority corridor.

You also know his deep belief that conserving our most outstanding natural resources is a way to promote economic development. Today, West Virginia has the longest network of federally protected rivers in the Eastern United States, because of Congressman Rahall's tireless efforts.

But there's another side to the Congressman, which brings me here today. He is a national leader in transportation.

After Memorial Day, his committee will begin working on the legislation that charts the future of transportation in this country. It is the bill that will determine how much we will invest in constructing and reconstructing our highways and transit in the next six years.

- more -

The President sent to the Congressman and his colleagues our proposal, which would invest $175 billion. That is an 11 percent increase over the prior six years. And in important areas it's up even more: the core highway programs, 30 percent; new transit construction, 17 percent; safety, 25 percent; the environment, 30 percent.

I can say that here in West Virginia, that would include $1.1 billion in investments over the six years. And it would support 7,600 jobs.

We're calling our proposal NEXTEA -- the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act. Why crossroads? Because the interstate system that President Eisenhower put in place helped us to build a national economy. But today, we are at a crossroads and we have to continue to find an edge as we Americans compete -- to win -- on an international stage. This legislative proposal will help us do that. It is to speak as much about the next 60 years, as it is the next six years.

Let me mention a few features that are of particular interest to West Virginia.

First, the President's proposal specifically provides funds for the Appalachian Corridor, which includes 112 miles of roads here in West Virginia.

Second, NEXTEA will cut red tape to give states the flexibility to build projects they want, not which Washington dictates. And to build them sooner, every day and in every way, using innovative financing techniques.

The kind of innovations, being used to replace the Cheylan Bridge between Charleston and Montgomery and the Shandle Bridge in Mason County.

Third, the President's proposal will increase -- by 35 percent -- funding for preserving national scenic byways and bike paths, programs that cost relatively little, but greatly improve the quality of our lives.

Again, Congressman Rahall is a national leader in understanding this, and you can see it throughout the state.

We want more successes like the the Greenbrier River Trail, which cost $335,000 and has produced over $3 million in economic benefits in Southeastern West Virginia.

Or the North Bend Rail Trail in the central part of the state, that converted the old rail line into a bike, horse, and pedestrian path. It has not only connected communities, but 30 businesses have been established or expanded to serve trail users.

Fourth, the President's proposal will allow the transit systems in smaller communities like Huntington, Charleston, Parkersburg, and Wheeling more flexibility in how they can spend their federal transit dollars -- whether for capital or operating needs.

Fifth, clearly, there are special people we must help -- those trying to get off welfare and onto jobs. Many people think this is an urban problem, but 20 percent of welfare recipients live in rural America. And only six percent of all welfare recipients have cars. So, as more Americans get off welfare rolls and onto payrolls, we need to make sure there is public transportation available. Transportation is the to in that phrase "welfare to work," so we are proposing to invest $600 million nationwide in an access to jobs program.

Along the same lines, we need to prevent youngsters from going on welfare to begin with. And we need to give young Americans the skills so that they can get high-paying construction and transportation jobs.

So, we want to continue funding programs, such as the one in South Charleston where 20 young Americans restored an Indian burial ground, or the project in Malden to reconstruct Booker T. Washington's cabin.

Now, Congressman Rahall has so kindly said that the President's proposal will be the standard by which all other bills are judged, as this goes through the legislative process.

So, we're going to be working with him, with Senator Byrd, who has been a leader in transportation in the Senate. And we'll be working on a bi-partisan basis, with Republicans as well. For transportation should never be a partisan issue.

For we're building more than roads and bridges. We're building a nation. Transportation is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel, it's about providing opportunity for all Americans.

So, thank you Congressman for your support, and I look forward to learning about the projects here in West Virginia.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
FLEMING FELLOWS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
STATE LEGISLATORS
MAY 28, 1997

Good afternoon to all of you -- and a special hello to the two legislators from my home state -- Representative Judy Smith and Senator James Argue.

As they know, I come from a long line of state lawmakers: my mother-in-law ... her brother ... my cousin ... all are in the Arkansas Legislature. So, I have state lawmaking in the genes, and I understand -- clearly -- the importance you play to our nation.

I have always had a long-standing belief that transportation is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It's about people. It's about building roads to a more prosperous future. It makes our enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness possible.

So, when I came into office, a little over 100 days ago, I said that I had three goals:

1) Safety will be the number one priority of the DOT; 2) that we will invest in our infrastructure to ensure that America's transportation system meets the needs and desires of the American people in the 21st century; 3) that we will use a common-sense approach to running a department so that it works better and costs less.

Let me say this: to meet my goals, I need the support of state houses across our country. I believe, as President Clinton does, in strong state and local partnerships so we can develop common ground and policies that you and I can embrace, and put into action.

What I'd like to see, more than anything else, is for every state legislature in this country to pass primary seat belt laws. A law that says an officer can stop a driver or passenger for no other reason than they aren't buckled.

Clearly these laws work. Twelve states and the District of Columbia have them, and on average, they have increased their seat belt use rates 15 percentage points. We could save 4,000 lives a year. Can you tell me any other vote that you could cast that could save as many lives? I would be glad to do anything I can to help those of you in states without primary seat belt laws to pass them.

To meet my goals, I also need bi-partisan support of Congress. This summer, there is no legislation as important for the future of this country than the proposal before Congress on

how much we will invest in constructing and reconstructing our highways and transit systems over the next six years.

The President's proposal would provide for almost $175 billion -- an 11 percent increase over the last six years, with 49 states receiving more dollars. In these times of working toward a balanced budget, when you do well if you hold your own, transportation is doing very well.

The President's proposal would increase key areas even more, 25 percent more on safety; 30 percent more on the environment; 30 percent for core highway programs; and 17 percent to fund new transit construction.

We're calling our proposal NEXTEA -- the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act. Why crossroads? Because the interstate system that President Eisenhower put in place helped us to build a national economy. But today, we are at a crossroads and we have to continue to find an edge as we Americans compete -- to win -- on an international stage. This legislative proposal will help us do that. It is to speak as much about the next 60 years, as it is the next six years.

Yes, our proposal will cut red tape to give states the flexibility to build projects you want, not which Washington dictates, and to build them sooner, every day and in every way.

Clearly these investments will make it possible to help all Americans -- whether they live in urban, rural, or suburban America. But clearly, the President believes there are special people we must help -- those who are trying to get off welfare and onto jobs.

Only 6 percent of welfare recipients own cars. They need public transportation. Transportation is the "to" in the phrase welfare to work, and our $600 million access to jobs program will make a difference. And last week, the President also announced grants that my Department is funding, together with the National Governor's Association, to help states develop transportation plans to get former welfare recipients to their jobs.

The way to prevent people from going on welfare to begin with is to create jobs. NEXTEA will support almost one million jobs, nationwide, in the next six years, good-paying jobs to build our roads and transit systems.

And I believe we need to step up our efforts on keeping people off welfare to begin with. I just came from a meeting of minority- and women-owned contractors, and I told them that it is my hope that as much as $20 billion in NEXTEA will go to these contractors. That would support hundreds of thousands of good,

high-paying construction jobs. And we have provisions that allow states to hire welfare recipients and residents of empowerment zones for those jobs.

The other way to prevent welfare is to attract young people to pursue high-paying transportation jobs. The President announced in Philadelphia at the summit on volunteerism, that the Transportation Department, with our public and private sector partners, will reach a million children.

I call it the Garrett Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program, after the inventor of the traffic signal. Tomorrow, at the Garrett Morgan Cleveland (Ohio) School of Science, I will kick off this program.

I plan to go into communities, into the toughest neighborhoods of this country, maybe some of your cities, to teach kids, as I was taught, that a job should be something they aspire to, that will challenge them. They need to understand that the greatest property of a person is the use of labor.

Let me end on this. I believe that as a nation we need to invest more in our infrastructure. I am proud to work for a President, who has invested more than any President in history. And I am proud that in my time in office, I will work with Congress to increase that support even further.

But I can not do it alone. The debate will be long and loud this summer. But with the help of our many partners, including all our state and local officials, I know we'll be successful. Our best days as a nation are yet to come.

Thank you.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, May 29, 1997

Contact: Kara Gerhardt
202-366-4570

MEDIA ADVISORY

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater will travel to Cleveland, Ohio's Garrett Morgan School of Science on Friday, May 30, 1997, to launch the Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program, a national education initiative designed to give students the math, science and technology skills necessary to run the transportation system of the 21st century.

Slater will be joined in kickoff festivities by Cleveland Mayor Michael White and students of the Garrett Morgan School of Science.

The program is a public-private partnership designed to reach students from elementary school through high school and encourage them to learn about a career in the transportation industry. The goal of the program is to reach one million students by the year 2000.

Garrett A. Morgan (1877-1963) was an African-American inventor from Cleveland. His most notable inventions were the automatic traffic signal and the gas mask.

WHO: **Rodney E. Slater, U.S. Secretary of Transportation**
Michael White, Mayor of Cleveland

WHAT: **Kickoff of the Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program**

WHEN: **Friday, May 30, 1997**
9:45 a.m. Tour of computer lab and demonstration
10:00 a.m. Kickoff of Garrett A. Morgan Program
10:30 a.m. Tour of exhibits with students

WHERE: **Garrett Morgan School of Science**
4016 Woodbine Avenue, Cleveland, OH

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
GARRETT A. MORGAN PROGRAM
MAY 30, 1997
CLEVELAND, OHIO

In January, President Clinton gave a very important speech to the nation, called the State of the Union. It was on television, and all the members of Congress were there. In the speech, he said he wants all Americans to have the best education in the world. That is his number one priority.

Let me explain why a Transportation Secretary cares about your education. I care, because I need workers for the 21st century, people who have the skills and the desire to be pilots, or truck drivers, or railroad engineers. I need good people to build highways; or to work in auto plants; or to build airplanes; or to serve our country in the Coast Guard.

So, I want to get one million kids thinking about pursuing transportation careers. Last month, President Clinton announced my goal to the whole nation -- that is how important it is. I call it the Garrett A. Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program.

And of all the schools in the whole country, I am beginning my recruiting right here, in Cleveland, at the Garrett Morgan Cleveland School of Science.

Let me ask: who wants to be first? Who wants to be a pilot? Who wants to design cars? Who wants to drive a truck?

I picked your school to be first, because, well, Garrett Morgan is a hero of mine. I know you study about him, and I want you to think about him for a minute. I want you to put yourself in his shoes.

If you think it's hard growing up today -- maybe some of you come from families with not a lot of money, and you have to face bad things like crime and drugs and gangs. But think about how hard it was for Garrett Morgan to grow up.

- more -

His parents had been slaves. The right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness that Jefferson said all Americans should have was not theirs.

When Garrett Morgan was born, slavery had been replaced with lynchings and mobbings. African-Americans could not find jobs. They could not vote. They could not go to school with children of other backgrounds. All of you have more education than Garrett Morgan ever had.

Yet he prevailed. He started his own business, and hired 30 people to work for him. He invented the traffic signal, because he saw a terrible accident and he wanted to do something so it would not happen again.

He was driven to make a difference in his life, and not let the hardships that were all around him get him down. So he worked hard. He studied hard. He aspired to own a business, to employ people. The greatest property of a person is the use of labor, and he used his for the good of all.

Because you go to the school with his name on the door, a school that all of you have specially chosen to come to, we owe it to Garrett Morgan to try to do just as well as he did, don't we?

I want to help you. So do all the friends I brought with me today.

I am pleased to announce, that the United States Department of Transportation will donate 30 computers to your school, for all of you to use, beginning next year.

TRW has committed to wiring the school, which is an enormous commitment. What all this means is that you will be able to reach the Internet. You'll be able to send e-mail to me. Or you can hang out with the President at the electronic White House.

BP America, SAIC, and the Greater Cleveland Growth Association will be providing software; and BP America also will donate a teaching unit on road safety.

The Cleveland Federal Executive Board will be finding buddies for you, and the fine men and women of the Coast Guard will help establish a tutoring and mentoring program. So, if you need, some people you can talk to and learn from -- you'll have them. I had buddies when I was growing up, and they are good.

And the local affiliates of the AFL-CIO will be holding career days, to open your eyes to all the opportunities there are in transportation.

But let me say this. You are not getting all of this for free. I am putting a price tag on it. I want you to earn it.

I want you to earn it by working hard, and improving your math and science skills. Some of you may think math is boring, but if you want to be a pilot or run a crane or invent something spectacularly like Garrett Morgan did, you need algebra and geometry -- trust me.

I want you to earn it by beginning right now to start thinking about what you want to be when you grow up. I want you to develop a plan. You see, if you start thinking about what you want to be in life in 12th grade, that's a little late. When you are in sixth grade is when you begin, because you have to develop the math and science skills over time to go into transportation.

Do you know, that when I was your age, I decided I wanted to go to college. But my family was very, very poor, and I knew we could never come up with the money. So, when I was 12 I asked my mom permission to play football, and she was against it. The biggest debate we ever had in the Slater home, was over whether I'd play football!

But I told her my plan. My plan was to play football so that I could win a scholarship to college. And I told her my plan was to study hard, because football wasn't the end goal, education was. So, guess what? She let me play. Yet if I started playing football when I was 17 or 18, and not 12, I wouldn't have developed the skills I needed to win the scholarship, would I?

Well, it's the same here: you need math and science skills if you want to be transportation professionals. And you need them now.

So, I am beginning here, at this wonderful school. And I am going to go all around the country, to find a million kids for the transportation workforce of the 21st century.

Are you with me?

Thank you.

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